Title: Need to restore subsidy given on the food items supplied through Public Distribution System and to increase the ration quota of rice for the State of Kerala.

SHRI T. GOVINDAN (KASARGOD): Sir, I would like to draw the attention of the Union Government towards the Central Government's move to reduce the subsidy on food items distributed through PDS.

It has come to my notice that the Union Government is considering the restructuring of the prices of items under the Public Distribution System. The Government have decided to stop subsidy on the food items meant for middle class people and to further reduce subsidy from 70 per cent to 50 per cent for those consumers who are living below the poverty line. In Kerala, as a result of reduction in the subsidy on rice meant for them considered as 42 per cent, the price of rice will become Rs. 6.50 against the existing price of Rs. 4 per kilogram. As per the Health Reports, the minimum requirement of rice for an average five-member family is 30 kilogram per month. The burden on the poor people will increase and also the burden on the State Government will be increased by Rs. 111 crore. This will, no doubt, affect the people of our country adversely and their life will become miserable.

As you are aware, Kerala is the only State where PDS is functioning very effectively and successfully. This move will spoil the well-managed ration distribution system prevailing in the State of Kerala for the last 40 years. In the circumstances, I urge the Government to restore the subsidy given to the food items to be distributed through PDS and also increase the ration quota of rice for Kerala so that the State Government can fulfil the requirement of the common people.